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JOSHUA:

A STORY OF THE EXODUS.

BY GEORGE EBERS,
Author of "URADA," "SERAPIS," Etc.

(NOW FIRST PUBLISHED.)



GO DOWN, grand-
father. I will keep
watch."

But the old man to
whom the words were spoken shook his
shaven head.

"But up here you get no rest."
"And the stars? Or even below; rest, in
such times as these? Throw my cloak over
me. Rest, in such a fearful night!"

"You are so cold; and your hand and the
instrument shake."

"Then steady my arm."
The old man obeyed the request; but
after a short space he exclaimed: "It is all
in vain. Star after star is swallowed up in
black clouds. Ah, and the bitter cry of the
city come up. Nay, it comes from our own
house. I am sick at heart, grandfather; only
feel how hot my head is. Come down, perchance
they need help."

"That is in the hands of the gods, and my
place is here. But there, there, eternal
gods! Look to the north across the lake!
No more to the westward. They come
from the city of the dead!"

"Oh, grandfather, father, there!" cried
the youth, a priestly neophyte, who was
leading him to an elder whose grandson
he was, the chief astrologer of Amn-Ra.
They were standing on the watchtower of
the temple of the god at Tanis, the capital
of the Pharaohs, in the north of the land of
Goshen. As he spoke he drew away his
shoulder on which the old man was leaning.

"There, there! Is the sea
swallowing up the land? Have
the clouds fallen on the earth to
surge and to? Oh, grandfather, may the
immortals have mercy! the nether world is
raving! The great serpent Apep is coming
forth from the city of the dead! It comes
rolling past the temple. I see it, I hear it!
The great Hebrew's threat is fulfilled! Our
race will be cut from the earth. Our
people! Its head is set toward the
Southeast. It will surely swallow up the
young sun when it rises in the morning!"

The old man's eyes followed the direction
of the youth's finger, and he, too, could dis-
cern that a vast, black mass, whose outline
was lost in the darkness, came rolling
through the gloom, and he, too, heard with
a shudder the creature's low roar and scattered
them far and wide.

The moon was not visible to mortal ken,
but the clouds played hide and seek with
the bright Southern stars, now covering
them, and now giving their rays free pas-

sage. Both stood with eye and ear alert, staring
into the night; but the star-gazer's eye was
fixed not upward, but down, across the city
to the distant sea and level plain. Over-
head all was silent, and yet not all at rest,
for the wind swept the dark clouds into
shapeless masses in one place, while in an-
other it rent the gray shroud and scattered
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old man as on the young one, but he was
quicker to recover himself, and his keen
and practiced eye soon discerned that it was
not a single gigantic form which was rising
from the necropolis to cross the plain, but
a multitude of moving creatures who seemed
to be surging or swaying to and fro on the
meadow land. Nor did the hollow hum
and wailing come up from one particular
spot, but was audible now nearer and now
more remote. Amn-Ra fancied that it was
rising from the bosom of the earth, and then
again that it fell from some airy height.

Fresh terror came, and now Amn-Ra
saw the grandsons of the old astrologer.
He seized his grandson's hand in his right
hand, and pointing with his left to the city
of the dead, he cried in a trembling voice:
"The dead are coming out of their graves!
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yards should have been crowded at this hour
with men, women and children, bringing
offerings to lay on the very spot where his
grandson lay under the hand of death.

A broad beam of light suddenly fell into
the vast court, which till now had been but
dimly lighted by a few lamps. Could they
be so mad as to think that the glad festival
might be held in spite of the nameless hor-
rors of the past night?

Only the evening before the priests in
pious pestilence the temples were to be
unattended and processions to be pro-
hibited. By noon yesterday many had
fallen to attend, because the plague had
fallen on their households, and the terror
had now come into this very sanctuary,
while he, who could read the stars, had been
watching them in their courses. Why
also should it have been deserted by the
watchmen and other astrologers, who had
been with him at sunset, and whose duty it
was to keep vigil here all night?

He turned once more to the suffering boy
with tender anxiety, but instantly started to
his feet, for the gates were opened wide and
the light of torches and lanterns poured into
the temple court. A glance at the sky
showed him that it was not long past mid-

night, and yet his fears were surely well
grounded—these must be the priests' return-
ing into the temple to prepare for the har-
vest festival.

Not so.
For when had they come to the sanctuary
for this purpose chanting and in procession?
Nor were these all servants of the divinity.
The populace had joined them. In that sol-
itary place, where the shrill wailing of
women mingled with wild cries of despair,
such as he had never before, in the course of
a long life, heard within these consecrated
walls.

Or did his senses deceive him? Was it
the groaning horde of unresting souls
which he had seen from the observatory
who were crowding into the sanctuary of the
god?

Fresh horror fell upon him; he threw up
his arms in prohibition, and for a few mo-
ments repeated the formula against the
malice of evil spirits; but he presently
stopped, for he saw that he was not alone
in the through some friends who yesterday,
at any rate, had been in the land of the living.
Foremost, the tall figure of the second
prophet of the god, then the women devoted
to the service of Amn-Ra, the singers and
the holy fathers, and when at last, behind
the astrologers and pastophori, he saw his
son-in-law, whose home had till yesterday
been spared by the plague, he took heart
and spoke to him. But his voice was
drowned by the song and cries of the coming
multitude.

The courtyard was now fully lighted; but
everyone was so absorbed in his own sorrow
that no one heeded the old astrologer. He
snatched the cloak off his own shivering
body to make a better pillow for the boy's
tossing head, and while he did so, with
fatherly care, he could hear among the
chanting and wailing, the approaching
crowd, first, frantic curses on the Hebrews,
through whom these woes had fallen on
Pharaoh and his people, and then, again
and again, the name of the heir to the crown,
Prince Harnes, and the tone in which it
was spoken, and the formulas of mourning
which were added, announced to all who
had ears to hear that the eyes of the first-
born of the King on his throne were also
sealed in death.

As he gazed with growing anguish in his
grandson's pale face the lamentations for
the prince rang out a fresh and louder than
ever, and a faint sense of satisfaction crept
into his soul at the impartiality of death,
who spared not the sovereign on his throne
any more than the beggar by the wayside.

He knew not what had brought this noisy
throng to the sanctuary.

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He went forward with such haste as his
old limbs would allow to meet the column
of mourners, but before he could join them
he saw the gatekeeper and his wife come
out of the gatehouse, bearing between them
on a mat the corpse of a boy. The husband
held one end, his wife the other, and the
other, and the stalwart man had to stoop
low to keep their stiff burden in a hori-
zontal position that it might not slip down
toward the women. These children closed
the melancholy party, and a little girl
holding a lantern led the way.

No one, perhaps, would have observed
them but that the gatekeeper's wife shrieked
forth her griefs so loudly and shrilly that it
was impossible not to hear her cries. The
second prophet of Amn turned to his com-
panions, the procession came to a standstill,
and, as some of the priests went nearer to
the body, the father cried in a loud voice:
"Away, away from the plague-stricken!
Our first-born is dead!"

The mother, meanwhile, had snatched the
lantern from her little daughter, and, hold-
ing it so as to throw a light on the face of
the dead boy, she shrieked out:
"The god hath suffered it to come to pass.
Yes, even under our roof. But it is not his
will, but the curse of the stranger in the
land that has come over us and our lives!
Behold, this was our first-born; and two
temple servants have likewise been taken.
One is dead already; he is lying in our little
room yonder; and there, there, here lies
young Harnes, the grandson of Harnet, the
star-seer. We heard the old man calling,
and saw what was happening, but who can
hold another man's house up when his own
is falling about his ears? Beware while it is
yet, for the gods have opened even the
temple gates to the abomination, and it the
whole world should perish I should not
surprised and never complain—certainly
not. My lords and priests, I am but a poor
and humble woman, but I am not in the
right when I ask: Are our gods asleep, that
a magic spell has bound them? Or what
are they doing, and where are they, that they
leave us and our children in the power of
the vile Hebrew race?"

"Down with them! Down with the stran-
gers! They are magicians; into the sea
with them! The sorcerer!"
As an echo follows a cry, so did these im-
precations follow the woman's curse, and
Harnet, the old astrologer's son-in-law,
Captain of the archers, whose blood boiled
over at the sight of his dying, fair young
nephew, brandished his sword and cried
in a frenzy of rage: "Follow me, every
man who has a heart! At them! Life for
Ten Hebrews for each Egyptian whom their
sorcerer has killed!"

As a gust will rush into the fire if only
the ram leads the way, the crowd flocked to
follow the noble warrior. The women pushed
in front of the men, thronging the doorway,
and as the servants of the sanctuary hesitated
they should know the opinion of the prophet
of Amn, and said deliberately:
"All who wear priests' robes remain to
pray with me. The people are the instru-
ment of heaven, and it is theirs to repay.
We stay here to pray for success to their
vengeance."

CHAPTER II.
Bale, the second prophet of Amn, who
acted as deputy for the now infirm old head
prophet and high priest, withdrew into
the holy of holies, and while the multi-
tude of the inferior ministers of the god pro-
ceeded to their various duties, the infuriated
crowd hurried through the streets of the
town to the strangers' quarter.

As a swollen torrent raging through a
valley carries down with it everything in its
way, so the angry mob, like a flood, swept
on, compelling everyone on their way to
join them. Every Egyptian from whom
death had snatched his nearest and dearest
was ready to join the swelling tide, and it
grew into a number of hundreds of thousands.
Men, women and children, slaves and free,
borne on the wings of their desire to wreak
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A FRENCH VINEYARD.

Gathering the Grapes That Make the

Famous Wines of France.

HOW THE PICKERS WORK AND LIVE.

Singing to and From Work Like Comic

Opera Peasants.

SOME FACTS ABOUT POPULAR WINES

(CORRESPONDENCE OF THE DISPATCH.)

ARIS, September 21.

A grape vine grow-
ing in front of one's
own house, stretching
out its tiny tendrils,
and laden in the early
autumn with vermil-
ion bunches, is a
pretty sight; but you
should see the hill-
sides and high valleys
of those parts of
France where wine is
made if you would
like to know something about the sector for
which this country is so famous. Name me
other wines that equal those of France.
Where else can you find such fluids as her
Medoc, Burgundies and sparkling wines?
I am fond of the grand crus of Sauterne,
or those Bordeaux that have bouquet, lin-
pidity and the transparent color of a ruby,
or champagne at the head of all, and of the
grape gathering as it goes on in valleys or
among the hills, where sparkling wines par-
excellence are produced, and of which Ay,
Reims and Epernay are the chief places.

PICTURESQUE VAGABONDS.

The main road from Paris to Strasbourg
is filled with these vine-gatherers, as they
call themselves, but thousands of them are
vagrants. The rascals tramp in separate
bands, and frighten the country people,
from whom they steal food and lodging, be-
yond all endurance. Gendarmes are few
in number, and if all the scamps were
caught their captors would be puzzled to
know where to put them. At Ay these
guerrillas take up arms and guard their
vineyards. It is imprudent to go
from Epernay to Ay or vice versa—a dis-
tance of two miles at most—without a good
revolver. They have been employed in re-
cent years and are informed by letter
when their services will be required. Those
who hail from Lorraine arrive in four-
wheeled wagons drawn by mules—long cars
in which 25 persons manage to pack them-
selves—the women wearing a small blue
bonnet or a handkerchief on their heads, the
men in stout high boots and breeches. Hang-
ing from the wagon are baskets for the vin-
tage, also pack-saddles, which will be hired
at a good price to convey the main loads
the barrels of wine which are gathered on
the slopes of Chavilly, Ay and Avenay.

Each party calls immediately on the prop-
rietor, and he at once forms "horizons,"
that is to say, groups of workmen whom
he requires to vintage such and such a field
in the shortest time possible. Everyone,
then, has a sleeping place allotted to them,
usually in a granary, where a thick bed of
straw has been laid down.

HIRING THE HANDS.
At 3 o'clock in the morning the reveille
sounds, but already the market place, or the
square in front of the Mayor's office, is
crowded. It is the time of hiring, and those
vagrants who have been employed in re-
cent years and are informed by letter
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wheeled wagons drawn by mules—long cars
in which 25 persons manage to pack them-
selves—the women wearing a small blue
bonnet or a handkerchief on their heads, the
men in stout high boots and breeches. Hang-
ing from the wagon are baskets for the vin-
tage, also pack-saddles, which will be hired
at a good price to convey the main loads
the barrels of wine which are gathered on
the slopes of Chavilly, Ay and Avenay.

Each party calls immediately on the prop-
rietor, and he at once forms "horizons,"
that is to say, groups of workmen whom
he requires to vintage such and such a field
in the shortest time possible. Everyone,
then, has a sleeping place allotted to them,
usually in a granary, where a thick bed of
straw has been laid down.

HIRING THE HANDS.
At 3 o'clock in the morning the reveille
sounds, but already the market place, or the
square in front of the Mayor's office, is
crowded. It is the time of hiring, and those
vagrants who have been employed in re-
cent years and are informed by letter
when their services will be required. Those
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